

WASHINGTON, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1907.

The Committee

ROBERT B. CAVERLY,
President Automobile Club.

ARTHUR G. NEWMYER.



W. A. COPENHAVER.



ROBERT E. HEATER.



THOMAS S. RICE.



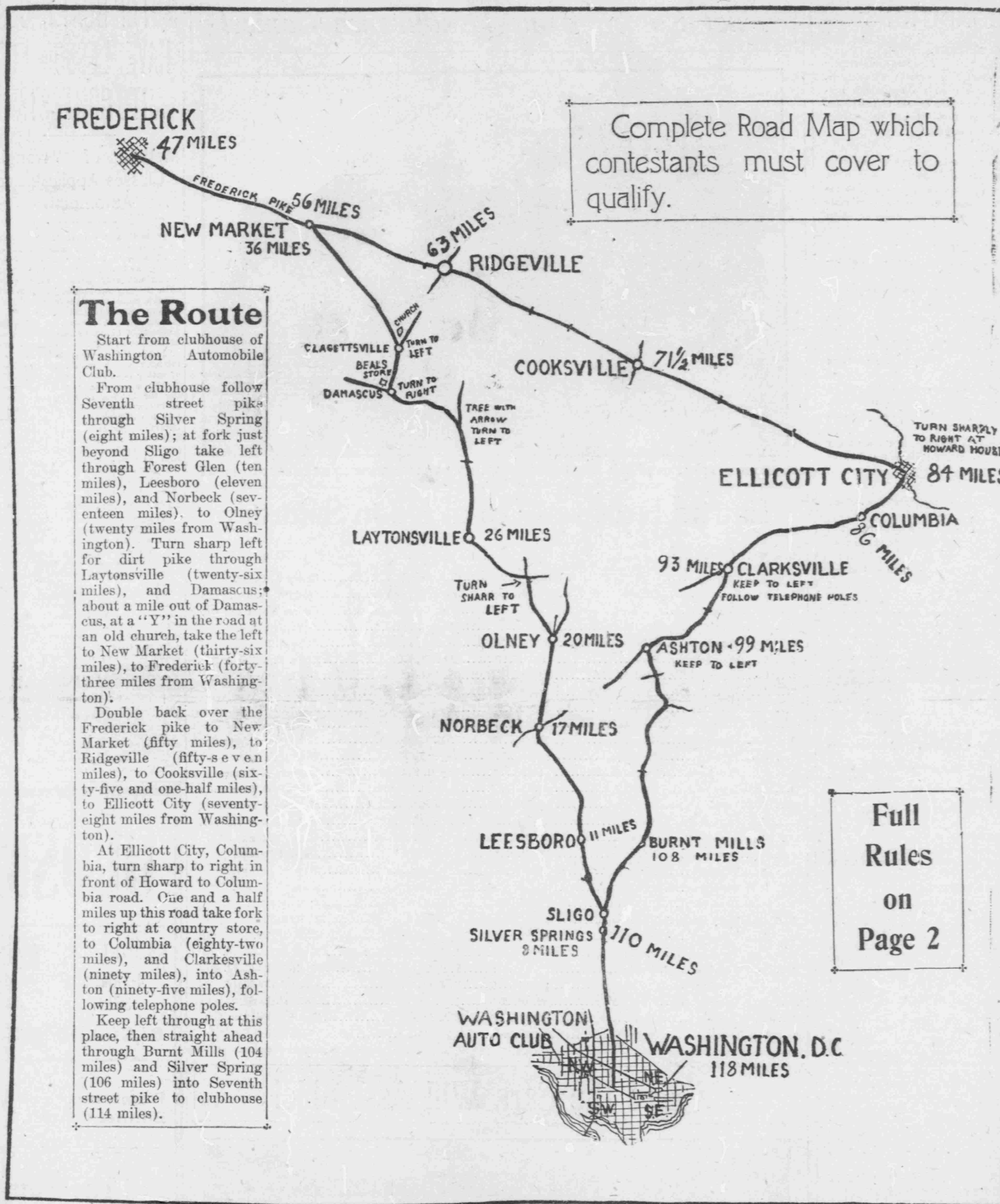
H. C. CHANDLEE.

—All Photos by Harris-Ewing.

Washington Times Sealed Bonnet Contest

Under the Auspices of The Automobile Club of Washington

DECEMBER 10, 1907



The Committee

LeROY MARK,
Secretary Automobile Club.

H. C. HUNTER.



FULTON R. GORDON.



C. E. WOOD.



O. J. DeMOLL.



GEORGE A. DEATEL.

—All Photos by Harris-Ewing.

BIG CONTEST OF NEXT TUESDAY
TO GLADDEN HEARTS OF AUTOISTS

By THOMAS S. RICE.

Washington is at last to come into its own as a place of importance on the automobile map.

When The Times sealed bonnet contest is held next Tuesday, December 10, the National Capital will be raised from the rank of a village where no auto news originates except notes of tours and changes among the agencies to a full-fledged, man's size city where contests are held which will have a wide importance, and be referred to by the makers of the winning cars as splendid triumphs.

Strange, isn't it, that Washington, with its asphalt pavements, wealthy inhabitants, and constant stream of touring automobilists should never have had a race or a contest worthy of mention in the auto columns of out-of-town papers, except rather foolish affairs on the Bonning track? Instead of jumping to the front as a pioneer and a source of innovations, Washington hung back until mere villages by comparison had gained name and fame in auto circles, and were subjects of constant comment and praise, while the seat of

Government was being worn thin from sitting still.

The Times saw that such a state of affairs was ridiculous, and a reflection on every automobilist and dealer in the District of Columbia. In order to start something and give the National Capital its proper standing, this paper projected and is going to carry through to success The Times' sealed bonnet contest of next Tuesday, which will be a first-class event of this sort, and will give lovers of the sport and makers of machines something to talk about for the remainder of the winter, not only here, but in clubs and publicity offices elsewhere.

Route Long Enough.

The route selected for the sealed bonnet contest is as long as the ordinary driver would care to follow, should the washer happen to be bad next Tuesday, and is plenty long enough to furnish a most excellent all-around trial of a stock machine's road qualities. Had the route been three, four, or five hundred miles, few would have been found willing to venture on such an expedition this time of year, and

would have been more of an experiment for the benefit of more or less professional tourists, or chauffeurs, rather than a fair trial in which the casual owner might enter with reasonable degree of success.

That the sealed bonnet contest will have far-reaching effects is already apparent. The great number of suggestions made by those who will participate, as well as by those who will not, is evidence of the interest aroused by this systematic attempt to give Washington automobilists a real competition. Hitherto single cars or a few cars belonging to a group of friends have made trips and tours around Washington, or to far-distant points, but there has been practically no tendency to get the owners together and have runs in which a definite object was to be attained, and the winner get a trophy as a reward for his own skill or the excellence of his machine.

Little or no record has been kept of the tours from this city except in the columns of The Times, and in no case was there any official or accurate checking, noting of times and roads,

and reporting on conditions that would be of permanent value to those who might follow the same route.

Last Year's Trip a Success.

Last summer The Times ran its highly successful auto tours, which were written up by experienced reporters, and gave the owners of machines in Washington their first opportunity to learn about the variety of short trips that might be made by those anticipating a run of a day or two and wondering where they should go. These stories, with their maps and directions, aroused the interest in touring which has been directly responsible for the contest which will be held next Tuesday.

Nothing tends to stir the desire of a non-owner of an automobile more than reading or hearing of pleasant pilgrimages successfully performed by either friends or strangers, and every line in The Times devoted to accounts of the roads around Washington was that much done for the trade, as well as the instruction of the public. But it is well known that unless there is competition, with a prize to be won, all such enthusiasm will invariably reach

a certain point, then die away. Few men like to flock by themselves, and the vast majority join eagerly in such affairs as bicycle or automobile runs in preference to mooning around the country alone. These runs keep alive not only the interest of the participating individuals, but of the stay-at-homes and those who are considering propositions to enter the game.

That the dealers of Washington have not long ago recognized these truths and organized runs on their own accounts is somewhat surprising. It was because they did not that The Times decided to enter the breach.

Washington a Good Field.

As has been clearly pointed out by a dealer, Washington is largely a city of transients, especially in the fall, winter, and early spring. It is then that the Senators and Representatives, the wealthy politicians not in Congress, the representatives of corporations, and thousands of other people, with more or less money to spend and make a show, are in our midst. These opulent

(Continued on Second Page.)